

TERM 1 NEWSLETTER 2017/2018

Milestone Academy



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TERM DATES 2017/2018

Term 1 Mon 4th Sept – Fri 20th Oct
Term 2 Mon 6th Nov – Wed 20th Dec
Term 3 Thurs 4th Jan – Thurs 8th Feb
Term 4 Mon 19th Feb – Thurs 29th Mar
Term 5 Mon 16th Apr – Fri 25th May
Term 6 Mon 4th Jun – Tues 24th Jul

Staff dev days: 9th February, 25th July, 26th July.

Bank Holidays: Monday 7th May 2018.

Dear Families,

Term 1 has been very busy as usual, with lots of new pupils joining us. All pupils have settled in well to their new classes, and I would like to thank all families for the preparation that is undertaken by you all to prepare your son/daughter for the start of the new year.

It was lovely to see so many parents at the Parent Consultation Days this week. We will be sending out the Parent Survey after half term, so please comment on the form if there are any ways in which we can improve the sessions. We value your feedback to help us to continuously improve.

Pupils have been working very hard this term, and have also had some fun activities to get involved in. The planetarium visit for Space Week was a huge success, and the harvest festival assemblies were fantastic.

We have had many requests for the term dates for the next academic year (2018-19) to enable families to book holidays early, so these are attached at the back of this newsletter.

I hope you all have a lovely two week half term (the first in Milestone's history), and we will open again on Monday 6th November at 9am.

Kind Regards,

Nigel - Principal

Phase 1

Phase 1 have had a lovely, and very busy start to the school year. We welcomed a new class "Butterflies" to the department and it has been lovely to welcome so many new pupils to the Academy. Our topic this term has been "all about me" and pupils have been learning about themselves as well as their new surroundings.

Flamingo Class held a lovely Harvest festival and the children were all fantastic in their roles.

Next term our topic is "Saturday night at the movies" and we are looking forward to exploring lots of different types of films, as well as looking at the difference between old and new media.

We will be holding a Phase 1 Coffee Afternoon on November 15th, where you can have a chance to meet other parents and share a cup of tea and a slice of cake; Please make a note in your diary, and further information will follow.

Nicky McCarthy - Assistant Principal, Phase 1.



NOTICE

Please could all parents and carers dropping their children off at school in the morning return to their cars and vacate the space as soon as possible. This will enable the traffic to keep flowing so we can get the children into school quickly.

Thankyou for your co-operation.

REPORTING PUPIL ABSENCE

Please remember that if your child is absent from school, you must call as early as possible to let us know. Dial 01474 709420 and select Option 1.

MEDICATION

Please ensure that any medication sent to school is passed from adult to adult and not in your child's school bag. Please be aware that KCC provide the school transport. Please ensure that the driver and escort know of any medical needs that your child may have.

Phase 2

Phase 2 have been settling into new classes, new routines and plenty of learning opportunities. Teaching staff have gone above and beyond to ensure that a variety of exciting, practical, tactile and at times rather messy experiences are happening daily in classes.

This term outside of the classroom, Ocean class have been swimming at North Kent College and Meadow Class went horse riding at the Arrow Riding School, Mountain and Field had gymnastics sessions in school with Beaming Stars whilst Coast, Woodland and Forest have had Aqua Learn sessions here at school.

To celebrate space week this year we were lucky enough to have a visit from a mobile planetarium where the pupils watched a short film about space travel and the costumes they wore to the dress up day were out of this world!!

Simon Stanton - Phase 2 Leader



KCC TRAINING

KCC training next term is Story Sacks which is starting on 8th November for 5 weeks from 9:30am to 11:30am.

KCC have run a very successful First Aid Course for parents during Term 1. Term 2 will be a course about supporting Literacy by using Story Sacks - this is a five week course open to all parents of Milestone including Satellites. We are hoping that they can run another First Aid Course during this academic year, please apply to Reception if interested.

Phase 3

Term 1 is often an exciting yet challenging term, with students becoming familiar with a new class environment as well as some new faces. This year has been no exception; however we are really pleased at how well the students have settled into the Phase 3 department, particularly those who have moved up from Phase 2, and those new to the school.

Term 1 has been full of excellent learning opportunities. Roman and Tudor class have worked towards their individualised targets with sensory learning experiences. Viking, Sparta and Norman Classes have been learning about different parts of the world and languages through the theme 'Adventurers and Explorers' and Empire Class have studied the work of Roald Dahl in English and have done some fantastic descriptive writing. Phase 3 celebrated World Space Week with a visiting Planetarium, dress up day and afternoon of Space crafts, Sensory Science and a Space movie.

Noleen Donaghy-Parkhouse - Phase 3 Leader

Lucie Featherstone - Assistant Principal Phase 3



INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE PLANS FOR PUPILS - UPDATED SYSTEM

There is now a dedicated email address for changes/amendments to IHPs. We are asking parents/carers to please email:

pupilhealthplans@milestoneacademy.org.uk with any changes or

amendments to their child's IHP. If you do not have access to emails, then please write to Nigel Jones, Principal, with any changes or amendments needed to your child's IHP.

This new system will ensure that any changes can be logged and recorded, ensuring that all Individual Healthcare Plans are correct and updated effectively.

Thank you to all those parents who have signed their child's IHP on the new signable online system. This has been a great success so far, and we hope to send all IHPs to parents for signing in this way in future.

PARENT INFORMATION TALK

The Helen Allison School are hosting an event on 9/11/17 with specialist SEN Solicitors providing **free** legal advice to families. This advice is applicable to any child with a disability whose family might be struggling to get the support they are entitled to.

To book for this event please follow the link below-

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/legal-advice-from-hcb-specialist-sen-solicitors-tickets-35176885010>

Free legal advice from HCB specialist SEN solicitors.

6-7pm HCB Solicitors will discuss the process in order to obtain an Education, Health and Care Needs assessment and how to secure an EHCP.

7.15-8pm HCB will answer questions from the audience.

8-9pm HCB Solicitors will be available to support you with individuals cases (please bring any associated paperwork with you).

THANKYOU

Thanks to all who contributed loose change to Jonathan's collection bucket at the school fair for his lap around Brands Hatch in aid of Ellenor Hospice. It raised £24. Together with his sister they raised a combined total of £366!

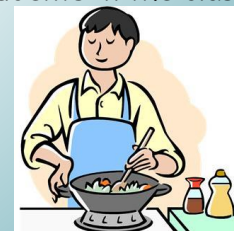
Phase 4

It was lovely to welcome both new classes, Scotney and Deal, and new students into Phase 4 in September. In addition we have a new Phase Leader, James Doddington, who is also Dover class teacher and Liesl Andersson is now Satellite Director for Milestone@Wilmington. Phase 4 also welcomed two 'new' classrooms in the Castle building, following the front of the building being essentially rebuilt during term 6 and the summer break. As well as the classrooms, we now also have a living skills area and wet room through some internal redesigning, with thanks to Liesl for her creative vision regarding this. We would like to thank the Leigh Academies Trust for this rebuilding who funded and managed the project.

The weather has been fairly kind to us this term which has enabled class groups to make the most of the outside learning spaces we have in school and the local community. Scotney Class have had successful visits to Asda, with the pupils learning to find products independently using visual support and then accessing the cafe to begin learning how to use money during transactions. Deal Class have enjoyed their science lessons, using their senses to explore marshmallows in a variety of ways. Dover Class have begun maintaining and developing horticultural spaces in school for their outside learning and have developed some unique stories during English lessons. Eynsford Class have also accessed Asda weekly and have progressed well when selecting snacks and paying for them with some independence. Canterbury Class have made some exciting 'snacks' during their food technology lessons, with the scotch eggs they made being the biggest we had ever seen! Leeds Class have begun to develop the outside 'compound' area, tidying up ready to use the bottle greenhouse in the coming weeks whilst some students in the class have focused well when accessing the interactive room.

So, it has been a busy few weeks! We wish you a restful half term.

Janet Tidmas - Assistant Principal, Phase 4



MILESTONE @ WILMINGTON

September welcomed a number of new students and staff to Wilmington and I would like to begin by welcoming them all to our department. Everyone has settled in very well to the new location and routines and the term has, on the whole, run very smoothly.

This year, due to popular demand, we have added the fitness gym to our recreation sports alongside swimming and ball games. Our carousel subjects have changed too, students are choosing from art and specifically animation, history and travel and tourism which is focussing on Italy.

This term Rochester class have been introduced to mindfulness via the .b course (pronounced [dot-be] standing for 'stop and be'). It involves learning to direct our attention to our experience as it is unfolding, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance. Research has demonstrated that mindfulness practice can improve mental health and wellbeing by reducing anxiety, stress and reactivity and bringing about greater calmness, self-awareness and happiness. Students are due to review their experiences at the end of term.

This term has been Upnor's turn to access Dragons Retreat each week which is always popular with everyone. Each week we go via the supermarket so that some of the students can cook their chosen meal for the rest of the group, while the rest practice cleaning upstairs. Next term our focus will move onto cooking healthy meals.

As always in Hever Class it has been a very busy term in particular for many getting to know their new environment. We have had the opportunity to use the Wilmington cookery facility and practiced a variety of skills in the kitchen. Also, students have successfully engaged in our reading scheme 'Accelerated Reader' and are enjoying the opportunity of using the school library.

Janet Tidmas - Assistant Principal & Director of Phase 4



SPORT NEWS

Extra Curricular PE is well underway to help improve sport opportunities for students in our primary department and to utilize the government funded Primary Sports Premium.

JG Sports Ed have been employed one day per week to offer multi sports to various groups.

Beaming Stars coaches have been delivering weekly Gymnastics sessions on a Wednesday with the aim of improving students agility, balance and co-ordination. Beaming Stars also run a separate afternoon per week to where they are teaching Dance to our primary groups.

We have upcoming Kent School Games events in Boccia and Football in November which will involve boys and girls from Phase 3 and 4.



We have been given the go ahead to send a group of students along to a satellite sports club to receive 10 weeks of free Tennis coaching. Students from our FE department will be taking part in this.

Steve Devereux - PE Subject Leader

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The aim of the academy is that all students achieve at least 95% attendance and arrive to school on time. Parents and carers of any child who is absent must notify us before 9am by telephone on each day of absence. Once a student returns to school the absence needs to be supported by a letter, accompanied by medical evidence where applicable.

Any pre-booked medical appointments should be registered with the academy office before the event happens. This will prevent any unnecessary phone calls or unauthorised absences.

Term Time Holiday Requests.

The Academy's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- The Academy may not grant any leave absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. These should include: service personnel returning from tour of duty, absence of leave recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or the child's rehabilitation, the death or terminal illness of a person close to the family, to attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Applications for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Principal of the Academy. The Principal will make the decision of acceptance or refusal. The fundamental principals for defining 'exceptional' are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'

Ref KCC Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct, effective from 1st January 2016.

MILESTONE'S LOVE FOR READING

This year Milestone Academy are continuing to promote a love of reading throughout the school. To kick start a year of adventure and exploration through stories, we are offering a variety of creative and informative events for parents and carers to attend.

Title	Date	Time	Information
Reading Brunch	14.11.17	9.30-10.30	Open morning for parents and carers to share stories and reading resources with their children over a light brunch.
Love of Reading	30.01.18	9.30-10.30	Opening workshop (part 1 of 3) parents and carers will gain an insight into reading and the English curriculum
Sensory Stories	01.03.18 World Book Day	9.30-10.30	Workshop 2 - parents and carers to be immersed in the world of sensory stories.
Creative Workshop	20.03.18	9.30-10.30	Workshop 3 - parents and carers to create their own resources for a sensory story sack.
Phonics Workshop	12.04.18	9.30-10.30	Workshop for parents to find more out about the way in which phonics are taught and early reading skills developed.

OTHER NEWS

Carolyn Parker, Clinical Specialist Paediatric Physiotherapist will be retiring at the end of November. Carolyn has provided physiotherapy for children here at Milestone for 25 years. There will be a coffee morning for Carolyn on 17th November.

Tim and Laura have been involved in supporting the "Special FRIENDS" group for some pupils. The group is a programme designed to help reduce anxiety and depression in young people. FRIENDS stands for: Feelings, Remember to relax, I can do it, Exploring solutions, Now reward yourself, Do it every day, Smile and ask for help.

It was lovely to meet so many families at the parent consultations this week. Please do contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss your child's development.

Liz & The Therapy Team

FRIENDS OF MILESTONE

Our Halloween disco was a great success, I think you will all agree. We would like to thank parent, Jason, our fabulous DJ for the great music. We are busy planning our Christmas disco and will be sending out details after the half term break.

Funds we have raised so far this year have provided picnic benches for the Castle outside space; and the Science Dome, which was accessed by the whole school. We have also received a fantastic donation of £837, raised by Alex (a friend of the school) to go towards a new minibus.

If there are any new parents out there that would like to get involved with the Friends, please do not hesitate to contact us via Lyn French in reception.

Thankyou for all your continued support.

Ruth Doodney - Chair of Friends of Milestone

